Bylaws of the Boise Democratic Socialists of America

Preamble

We are socialists. Our goal is to break the power of the ruling class and end the domination of capitalism over our lives and that of every life form on planet earth.

We want to build a socialist society based not on the imperatives of capital freedom and capital growth but of human freedom and human growth. We want to de-commodify the relationship of human beings to all production and consumption, and especially to basic needs such as healthcare, housing, transportation, and education. In a society of historic productive capability these things and more are basic human rights. We want to supplant the tyranny of private property with a society based in democracy and human flourishing.

To achieve these goals, we are committed to building a majority movement to gain state power and govern in the interests of the vast majority of people: those of us who must sell our labor power in exchange for the necessities of existence. We take a broad view of the working class and embrace a politics of solidarity between its diverse sections. We seek to build class-consciousness equally among all workers — in factories and startups, in hospitals and schools, those doing unpaid home and care labor, the retired, the sick, the incarcerated, and the unemployed.

We are committed to trade unions that struggle for the interests of all working people as a class. We are committed to fighting racism, sexism, persecution of gay and trans people, and discrimination, especially as it is codified in state policy and in the workplace. We seek an end to mass incarceration, deportations, and police terror. We will organize to resist state aggression against working people in the streets as well as at the ballot box.

We recognize the connections between the unsustainable exploitation of resources, capitalism, and climate change. We seek a socialist government that will redirect the advanced technology of our society away from war and the exploitation of working people. We want to transform our relationship to labor and to the natural environment toward a sustainable, humane and holistic society.

In all of our work together as Boise DSA, in every organizing structure, elected position, meeting, campaign, and committee, we seek to empower new leaders and lift their voices, to govern and lead with a deep commitment to democracy, transparency, and accountability, and to resist reaffirming the hegemonic structures of capitalism aligned against people of color, women, and LGBTQIA people inside and outside of the Local.
Boise DSA aims to ameliorate the social alienation of capitalism, affirm the values of mutual aid, friendship, and joy among our membership, and encourage deep democratic participation in the life of our organization. The adoption of the following bylaws only begins to express the

commitment, steadfastness, courage, and struggle that it will take to see in our real lives the beginnings of a really human world. We want bread — and roses too.

Article I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Boise Local of the Democratic Socialists of America, also known as Boise DSA or BOIDSA, and referred to throughout this document as the Local.

Article II: Basic Organization and Conventions

Section 1: General Membership Meeting
The General Membership of the Local, meeting in Convention or in Regular Meeting, shall be the legislative body of the organization. The General Membership shall meet at least once per month. Informational Meetings are not legislative meetings.

Section 2: Conventions
The Local shall meet in Convention annually during the first six months of the year, with at least thirty days notice given to all members. The Convention shall meet to elect officers, delegates to National DSA Convention and to debate and decide primarily, but not exclusively, Local issues, the political orientation of the organization, and program direction.

Section 3: Regular Meetings
Regular Meetings shall be held at least once per quarter and any member in good standing may bring a proposal to be decided by consensus process.

Section 4: Informational Meetings
The General Membership may call additional Local-wide Informational Meetings for a variety of reasons but at which official business will not be conducted and policies will not be set.

Section 5: Electoral Endorsements
Electoral endorsements shall be made by consensus process in the Regular Meeting.

Section 6: Quorums
Unless specified otherwise in these bylaws, a quorum of ten percent of the membership shall be required for valid meetings of the Convention or Regular Meeting.

Article III: Membership

Section 1: Definition
Members in good standing will include all DSA members as verified by National DSA, and are not currently suspended or terminated from the Local. All Local members in good standing shall have full and equal rights of membership.

Section 2: Voting and Office
All Members in good standing shall be eligible to

a. Vote in all elections and matters brought before The Membership, after having been a Member for at least thirty days;

b. Be nominated or appointed to office in the Local, after having been a Member for at least sixty days; and

c. Be elected as delegates from the Local to Regional, State, or National DSA convenings, after having been a Member for at least ninety days

Section 3: Proxy Voting
A voting member who is present at an election meeting may hold up to two signed proxies from other non-present members in good standing, and vote for those members.

Section 4: Member Discipline, Suspension, and Expulsion
General Membership shall have the power to suspend or expel members from the Local. Consensus is required to suspend or expel a member. In all cases, prior to discipline, the General Membership should consider and abide by the principles of privacy, accountability, and restorative justice. Members may be disciplined

a. If they are found to be in substantial disagreement with the principles or policies of the organization; or

b. If they consistently engage in undemocratic, disruptive behavior.

Article IV: Election of Officers

Section 1: Nominations
Elected positions shall be elected at the Local's annual Convention. Any member in good standing can run for elected position in the Local.

Section 2: Special Election
After the adoption of these Bylaws at the 02/21/2018 General Meeting, the General Membership will carry out a First Convention Meeting, in order to elect the first cohort of elected positions. These newly elected members will serve until the next Convention.

Section 3: Process
The elections process shall be fair, transparent, and democratic. There shall be a vote by secret ballot for each contested office at the Convention. The General Membership will be responsible for ensuring that elections are held, and may appoint an Elections Committee to oversee the process. No candidate shall be involved in handling or counting ballots. We will use the Schulze method of Condorcet voting process.

Section 4: Noticing of Elections

The General Membership shall give notice of any Local election in a dedicated email announcement no later than fifteen days prior to the election and shall include the time and place of the election, the candidates and/or questions before the membership in the election, and all pertinent instructions.

Article V: Elected Positions

Section 1: Positions

1. 2 Spokespersons
    1. Spokespeople shall be the official public spokespersons for the Local
    2. At least one must not identify as both white and cis-male
2. Treasurer
    1. The Treasurer will be responsible for administration of funds, budget, and financial organization of the Local. The Treasurer will report to the General Membership on the financial status of the organization at each Regular Meeting. The Treasurer will maintain transparent and open financial reports available to the entire membership upon request.
    2. The Treasurer shall act as the Chair of the Finance Committee.
3. Secretary
    1. The Secretary is responsible for publishing minutes, resolutions, reports, and other official records of the Local in a timely manner.
    2. The Secretary shall act as the Chair of the Records Committee.

All elected positions must participate in the Steering Committee.

Section 2: Vacancies
In the event of a vacancy an election is scheduled.

Section 3: Terms
Positions shall be elected at the Convention and their terms shall last until the completion of the following Convention, approximately one year later.

Section 4: Oversight
The General Membership will oversee all Committees and other official formations of the Local. See Article VI for more informational on Committees.

Section 5: State of the Local
The Steering Committee is responsible for presenting a "State of the Local" address each year at the annual Convention.

Section 6: Conflict Resolution

The General Membership is responsible for fairly adjudicating disagreements between members or groups of members within the Local. This shall include developing and overseeing an accountable and fair mechanism of conflict resolution.

Section 7: Review of Elected Members
We review these Elected Members in the interest of transparency and the preservation of our stated ideals. Reviews may be called at any other time by consensus process. The General Membership shall review the actions, accomplishments, and/or failures of the Elected Members to represent the will of the General Membership. Should the General Membership not come to consensus on any Elected Member's continues representation, a new election shall immediately be scheduled by the Steering Committee.

Section 8: Termination of Members
Boise DSA members may be terminated through the consensus process.

Article VI: Committees

Section 1: Standing Committees

1. Steering
2. Finance
3. Records

Each Committee shall have a Chair whose primary roles in meetings are to 1) appoint the official meeting roles, consisting of Facilitator and Scribe, and 2) to ensure that Boise DSA consensus/electoral process is adhered to throughout the meeting. These roles should rotate among Members in an equanimous manner. Facilitators should not call on white cis males more than 50% of the time if others are wishing to speak. Unless otherwise specified, the Chair shall be appointed by consensus or election (in the case there is no consensus and multiple people wish to serve) by the committee members. We don't have official committee members. Each committee is comprised of any Member in good standing who is interested in the work of the committee and attends the meeting in question.

Section 2: Formation of Working Groups
Additional Committees called Working Groups shall be formed by the General Membership to address a specific need that cannot be addressed by any existing committee.

Section 3: Process
The General Membership shall adjudicate any jurisdictional disputes between committees and working groups.

Article VII: Caucuses

Section 1: Definition and Purpose
Caucuses are independent, unofficial formations of members within the Local. The Local encourages the formation of Caucuses to promote a vibrant democratic culture within the organization. With or without consent from or recognition by any official Local leadership or the Local itself, members may self-organize into temporary or permanent caucuses according to shared interests, affinities, and/or political goals. Caucuses may promote policies and actions for the Local to take on, and may challenge Local leadership and/or official Local policies.

Section 2: Official Recognition
A Caucus will be formally recognized by the Local in one or more official media if no less than five members in good standing sign a mission statement that includes the name and purpose of the Caucus.

Article VIII: Delegates

Section 1: Election
Delegates to National, Regional, and State bodies shall be elected by the General Membership at the General Meeting most immediately preceding the Convention or other gathering at which delegates are needed. The delegate election process will conform to DSA National bylaws and the National Convention calendar.

Article IX: Dues

Section 1
The Local may institute, change, or abolish voluntary Local Dues by consensus of the General Membership at a General Meeting.

Article X: Amendments

Section 1
The bylaws approved at the 02/21/2018 General Meeting shall be provisional, to be altered or confirmed at our 2019 Convention.

Article XI: Rules of Order

Section 1: Committee Meeting Rules

All meetings must begin with the selection of meeting roles: facilitator and scribe. This can be done either by the committee chair (if applicable) or through consensus.

Section 2: Consensus Process

As Democratic Socialists, we strive for democratic processes in all aspects of our organization. The consensus decision-making process is both equitable and productive; it targets those with the most serious concerns first. We will use the consensus decision-making process as outlined at seedsforchange.org and use an 80% supermajority. This level may be changed through an appropriate proposal at a Regular Meeting, but may go no lower than 75%.